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COMMUNIST SUBVERSION THREAT TO AFRICA - I

TRAINING OF GUERRILLAS AND SABOTEURS

Africans, often without the knowledge or consent of their own governments, are being trained in sabotage, terrorism, and guerrilla warfare in Communist countries. Ostensibly, the training is being given to support "national liberation" movements. But the Communists, with their usual long-term objectives in mind, are using this as a cover to train, arm, and indoctrinate young men for eventual subversion against the new governments of Africa.

Recent evidence seems to indicate a three-point programme:-

- (a) Guerrilla training, open or secret, in Communist States - China, Bulgaria, Cuba and possibly Czechoslovakia and East Germany.
- (b) Communist-aided (money, arms, instruction) guerrilla training in sympathetic or non-aligned countries in Africa such as the United Arab Republic, Algeria, Congo, Guinea, Ghana and others.
- (c) Komsomol and political training of selected people as agents provocateurs to create disunity and the correct "revolutionary" atmosphere for guerrilla activity and revolt against new or unstable governments.
In this context there is also the risk that even university students sent to Communist countries can return home subverted.

Emphasis on Violence

The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and nationalist leaders are keeping a close watch on the situation. Communist emphasis on violence as a means of bringing about political change could have a strong appeal, especially among dissidents in one-party States.

China, the strongest advocate of violent revolution, has set the pace. But warnings have been voiced by, among others, Leopoldville's Etoile du Congo. On September 18, 1964, it said: "China is stepping up the training of Africans in guerrilla tactics and in subversion. The important men responsible for training camps are Chang Chi-yu and Liu Chang-sheng. Of these, the first is head of the

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Cultural Commission for Foreign Relations, the second is Secretary-General of the Chinese African Friendship Association. Instructors are trained at 'The First Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Institute' whose teaching staff includes leading Chinese Communists such as Teng Hsiao-ping and Chen Po-ta."

The Communist States are careful to hide this training behind agreed programmes of military aid and assistance, instruction, and supply of arms. But these open negotiations often provide opportunities for contacts with suitable recruits for their "guerrilla academies". China is known to have trained guerrillas and terrorists from the Cameroons, Angola, Guinea, Congo, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria and Bechuanaland. Bulgaria has trained recruits from Zambia, Kenya and the Cameroons. Cuba, which has set up guerrilla camps for more than 10,000 recruits, is reported to be training terrorists from Kenya, Zanzibar, South Africa, Rhodesia, Angola, Guinea, Mali and Ghana.

Training in Communist States

The Chinese Communists' experience of guerrilla warfare is readily available, openly or in secret, to Africans, especially those engaged in civil war or opposed to their own nationalist governments. The Peking People's Daily, in December, 1961 also claimed that Chinese pamphlets on guerrilla warfare enjoyed a wide circulation in Africa.

Convincing evidence of Africans being trained in military subversion came with the arrest of six men on their return to the Cameroons from China in 1960. Notebooks and other material in their possession gave full details of the 10-week courses which they and three other Cameroon nationals attended at a military academy just outside Peking. The course covered instruction on the manufacture of explosives, mines and grenades, their use in sabotage (demolishing bridges, railways, and telephone communications), and training in the use of more sophisticated military weapons as well as political indoctrination.

The six men were to pass on what they had learned to the local terrorist organisation, Armee de Liberation Nationale Kamerounaise (ALNK), the militant Left-wing of the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC). When the Cameroons became independent in January, 1960, the ANLK continued its subversive activities. The Chinese, significantly, chose to support a movement engaged in subverting the independent nationalist government, thus proving they are not interested in mere "national liberation" and that it is an atmosphere of unrest and political agitation which serves the aims of Communism, not peaceful national independence.

Under False Pretexts

The Cameroon Government was unaware at the time that these men were training in China. This was made clear by its delegate to the United Nations in December, 1961:

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"Information obtained ... shows that many young Cameroonian, inveigled and led into China under false pretexts, receive there psychological and military preparations for the ultimate goal of being sent back to our national territory, there to engage in subversive activities and to serve as the instructors and personnel in an eventual effective general rebellion."

The Chinese, purporting to back "freedom fighters", make an early start in selecting those trainee-guerrillas whom they feel may help them in their subsequent struggle for power and influence in an emergent country. They are particularly active in the Portuguese territories in Africa. In August, 1963, it was reported that an unspecified number of men from the African Independence Party of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands (PAIGC) had undertaken a six-month course in guerrilla warfare in China. Some 50 members of the Movement Populaire pour la Liberation d'Angola were also on a similar course. In 1963 a representative of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) who visited Algeria, claimed that President Ben Bella had offered military training to Rhodesian Africans. Volunteers, who could only be used for guerrilla activity, were to travel at the expense of the Chinese Government. Algeria, which has paid tribute to "the unceasing material and moral support" given to the FLN by Peking, still maintains strong military connections with China.

The Chinese Embassy in Dar es Salaam is the springboard for political activity in the whole of East and Central Africa where Peking obviously hopes to exploit any possible discontent and disillusionment which is sometimes felt in new countries.

Two Years in China

Other reports on guerrilla or irregular military training courses in China include:-

The former Minister of Education in the Lumumba Government, Pierre Mulele, who led the recent revolt in the Congo Kwilu Province, is reported to have been trained in subversion and guerrilla tactics during two years in China. According to the Hindustan Times, Mulele's faction received 200 tickets, "obviously to and from Peking", for the formation of military cadres under the supervision of the Chinese War Academy.

In December, 1964, China was behind plans to grant scholarships, including military training, to "revolutionary" African students in Indonesia.

In October, 1964, 10 "agitators", trained in China, had arrived in Rwanda and were at work among refugees. Six

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others returned from China to give "military training" to refugees.

Luca Fernandes, a self-styled "general", was trained in China. He was one of three infiltrators caught in Mozambique.

Eighteen Kenyans were undergoing a course in guerrilla warfare at Wuhan Military Academy, China, the East African Standard of Nairobi reported on September 5, 1964.

Seven captured supporters of Djibo Bakary, who attempted armed infiltration of Niger, admitted that they had been trained in Nanking and Peking. President Diori said that the ringleaders were trained in China.

Niemey Radio reported in October, 1964, that a captured terrorist, who was given intensive "military training" in China, was told by instructors that "to attack and eliminate all reactionaries" on his return would help progress. Another captured terrorist, Yarouba Issa, admitted that "all the training we had in China was against our will because we had no intention of returning to attack our brothers and sisters."

Le Niger (November 23, 1964) published a captured document which indicated that China-trained terrorists were returning with arms and ammunition to Niger.

The Congolese Central Government announced in February, 1962, that "rebels" were being trained in China. Rebels were being taught guerrilla tactics by Congolese instructors trained in China, according to Actualites Africaines (October 3, 1964).

The first group of members of the Luo tribe trained as guerrillas and saboteurs had returned to Kenya from China, according to reports in December, 1964.

OAU Aware of Danger

The OAU and its member-governments are fully aware of the potential threat behind the indoctrination and training of guerrillas by China. Their fears were voiced by the Ivory Coast's President Houphouet-Boigny in January, 1965, when he said:-

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"The dangers threatening Africa to-day are those from Communist China. Should we who do not want Africa to remain under foreign domination allow it to become Chinese? ... To arrive more rapidly at their (China's) goal, they have established training camps for our African patriots from which Communist subversion is organised to gnaw at our continent bit by bit. They have formed groups to be used to fight brothers and sisters in opposing camps. This is new in Africa and it is a tragedy that worries us."

Eastern European countries are also taking an increasing interest in training guerrillas and politically indoctrinated "freedom fighters" from Africa. Angolans have been trained in Czechoslovakia and East Germany while other Africans, including those from South Africa, have been trained elsewhere in Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria. Russian, Czech, and Bulgarian arms have followed them back to Angola and the Congo. Chinese anti-aircraft guns, automatic weapons, and ammunition have also been found in the Congo.

Bulgaria, one of the most militant of Communist States, is known to run guerrilla training courses for Africans. In 1963 a full-scale course on subversion was attended by some 200 Africans, including 76 Kenyans and 15 Cameroonian. Instruction was in English and covered small-arms training and the use of explosives. They were told to "lie low" on their return, make friends with the army, and await further instructions.

Bulgaria's most notorious graduate was John Chanda, a Zambian, who was arrested at Ndola in December, 1964, and fined £45, or seven months' imprisonment, for illegally bringing arms and ammunition into the country. The Bulgarian Government had provided Chanda, whom they dubbed "General", with a certificate explaining the origin of the weapons. He claimed, in fact, that they were presents from Bulgaria "to show my party."

Three Kenyans left for Bulgaria late in 1961, travelling via Addis Ababa. One, Hiram Mwangi, came into prominence in March, 1963, as leader of a group of guerrilla trainees. Like Chanda, he appears to have occupied a privileged position in Bulgaria with comfortable quarters and an official car. The Kenya African Democratic Union, then the country's opposition, expressed its disquiet over the training of members of the Kikuyu tribe in Bulgaria. Nevertheless, there was a dramatic increase in the number of trainees in April, 1964, when more than 100 Kenyans, including 79 Kikuyu, were flown to Bulgaria.

Promise of Scholarships

The Cameroonian trainees were lured into Bulgaria by exiled Left-wing groups who promised them "scholarships." But these, they were told later, were only

for "military training". Of the 15 who took the course, six were arrested on their return home.

Cuba has begun to play an important rôle in the training of politically-indoctrinated guerrillas from Africa. The main revolutionary training camp is reported to be at Mina del Frio, a village on the slopes of the Sierra Maestra. Students call the installation the "Guerrilla Academy". Political and theoretical aspects of revolution are taught at a school in Havana.

According to official estimates, some 100-200 Africans a year are being trained in Cuba. They come from Zanzibar, Kenya, South Africa, Rhodesia, Angola, Mali and Ghana. The African contingent is small, compared to those from other parts of the world, but according to Cuban revolutionary theory not more than a selected nucleus is needed. (Given money, material, and local backing, it is claimed, 20 or 30 commandos can ignite a revolution or cause wide disturbances). In Zanzibar, 20 to 30 people trained in Cuba formed the spearhead of the armed revolt which overthrew the Sultan and the government in January, 1964. They were sent to Cuba in January, 1962, by Sheikh Abdul Rahman Babu, formerly a New China News Agency representative in Zanzibar, who is now Minister of Co-operatives and Commerce in the government of Tanzania.

Training in Africa

Politically-indoctrinated guerrillas (often in the guise of "freedom fighters") are also being trained in Africa, and Algeria is probably the most important centre for this. There are many instructors, including Chinese, at camps there, and Algeria also has large stocks of arms left over from the seven-year struggle for independence.

The Tlemcen training centre has been instructing Africans from Portuguese territories since 1961, and more recently there have been intakes from South Africa. The Chinese Premier, Chou En-lai, expressed great interest in these centres on his visit and offered to make a substantial contribution.

The Congo has provided an almost equally important training centre for Angolans, who are being instructed by compatriots schooled in Algeria. The Angolan Revolutionary Government in Exile (GRAE) is known to have sought aid from China, but the Congolese are unlikely to welcome this after their own experience of Communist subversion.

Tanganyika has shown signs of concern since its army mutiny in January, 1964. Its refugee camps have become nests of unrest and intrigue, and more extremist dissidents have been expelled. Some refugees from Mozambique for instance, were recently reported to be training in the United Arab Republic. In November, 1964, the Tanzanian Government was compelled to transfer refugees from the capital, Dar es Salaam, to Mbeya more than 300 miles inland "where they would be less able to stir up trouble, and where foreign diplomats would be less able to subvert them."

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In Portuguese Guinea trained guerrillas received arms from Algeria and Communist countries, and employed Czech Communist military instructors. Their leader, Amilcar Cabral, is one of the few actually trained abroad.

Subversion of "Freedom" Groups

The Communists have been quick to exploit and subvert so-called "freedom fighters", many of whose efforts are now being directed against their own governments. The OAU, moreover, supports only what it considers to be legitimate "freedom" movements. Meanwhile, the Jeunesse of the Congo's Kwilu Province, trained by Pierre Mulele in Chinese methods of guerrilla warfare, are still regarded as a considerable threat to political stability in that part of Africa. Similarly, in the Federal Cameroons Republic, terrorists supported by Communist countries, are still fighting in the name of the illegal and exiled crypto-Communist Union des Populations du Cameroun.

Kenya's Minister for Pan-African Affairs, Mr. Leter Koinange recently warned the House of Representatives that some "freedom fighters" from other States, especially those seeking help to free their countries, were "spies". Such appeals would have to be examined closely. Kenya's own military unrest - the abortive army mutiny of January, 1964 - was not entirely unexpected. As early as 1962 there were reports that groups of Kenyans were training in methods of subversion and sabotage, as well as guerrilla warfare, in Ghana and the Soviet Union. They were to head "action brigades" to take over by force when the country became independent.

Later, it was reported that a guerrilla training camp had been established in Ghana by the Bureau of African Affairs.

Kenya's Defence Minister, Dr. Njoroge Mungai, told Parliament on March 30, 1965: "Many people have been trained in the armed forces in other countries, and the first we know about it is when they get back." Asked why there was a delay in accepting three Russian-trained "fighter pilots" for the Air Force, he replied: "Fully trained men are welcome, but they have to go through the proper channels if they wish to join the KAF."

Wish to Preserve Africa

Among African leaders who have exposed Communist subversive tactics are Presidents Diori of Niger and Yameogo of Upper Volta. They told a news conference on February 2, 1965, that they wished to preserve Africa, at the birth of its political independence, from the grip of Communist China. They condemned China's attempt to introduce, by force, "ideology, weapons, money, and subversion". President Diori pointed out that young Africans were being trained in China to be "leaders of subversion", while the "middle ranks" were being schooled in Algeria and at Manko, near Accra.

The Malawi Prime Minister, Dr. Hastings Banda, has dismissed "rebel" Ministers who had unauthorised contact with the Chinese Embassy in Dar es Saalam, and warned his country against the duplicity of Communists. One ex-Minister, Kanyama Chiume, is now believed to be in contact with the Chinese.